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INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE  
RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT 4234  
RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ASTANA 0448  
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK 4851  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0705  
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 0287  
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 0729  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 4433  
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 2723  
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 0744  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1383  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 1974  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1379  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2691  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC 0139  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC 0289

C O N F I D E N T I A L TASHKENT 000898

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/CEN, DRL, AND PRM  
PRM FOR MATTHEW JOHNSON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/04/2018  
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [ICRC](#) [KIRF](#) [PGOV](#) [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [KG](#) [UZ](#)  
SUBJECT: UZBEKISTAN: RESPONSE TO DEMARCHE ON EXTRADITION OF  
UZBEK ASYLUM SEEKER

REF: A. SECSTATE 61437  
[1](#)B. TASHKENT 660

Classified By: POLOFF R. FITZMAURICE FOR REASONS 1.4 (B, D)

[1](#)1. (C) In a diplomatic note dated July 14 (but handed to poloff in late July), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) responded to a diplomatic note the Embassy sent to the MFA over Erkin Halikov, an Uzbek asylum seeker who was imprisoned in Kyrgyzstan and extradited to Uzbekistan in May (reftels). The MFA's diplomatic note explained that "the appropriate government bodies" were investigating Halikov under several statutes of the criminal code, including 155 (terrorism), 159 (anti-constitutional activities), 223 (illegal entering or exiting of Uzbekistan), 242 (organization of a criminal enterprise) and 244-2 (creation or participation in an extremist organization). The MFA's diplomatic note offered no further details.

[1](#)2. (C) Shortly after delivering the original demarche in person to MFA America's Desk Chief Ismat Fayzullaev, poloff submitted a diplomatic note to MFA on June 12. In addition to the charges against Halikov, the Embassy's diplomatic note requested information on the current whereabouts and physical condition of Halikov and when and where he will be tried in a court of law, which the MFA's July 12 diplomatic note failed to answer.

[1](#)3. (C) On August 4, poloff spoke with human rights activist Surat Ikramov, who earlier reported on his website that Halikov would be tried with other individuals for religious extremism in the city of Shakhrisabz in Kashkadarya province. Ikramov reported that the Kashkadarya province prosecutor recently completed an investigation of ten individuals and charged them with membership in a religious extremist organization. Ikramov was unsure whether Halikov was among the ten individuals, but said that they were accused of participating in a banned organization with Halikov. According to Ikramov, Halikov used to live in Shakhrisabz,

but had not lived there for at least ten years. He believed that the charges against the ten individuals lacked merit. Ikramov expected that their trial would begin within the next three weeks. Since Qarshi, the capital of Kashkadarya province, lacks a pre-trial detention facility, he speculated that the trial would commence in Bukhara.

¶4. (C) Comment: While the MFA responded to our demarche, they did not provide all of the requested information on Halikov's current whereabouts and when his trial might commence. We are unsure about the reliability of Ikramov's information, but we will continue to follow this case closely and raise our concern with government officials.  
BUTCHER